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Finding Feminism in American Political Discourse : A Discourse Analysis of Post-Feminist Language

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Finding Feminism in American Political Discourse:

A discourse analysis of post-feminist language

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Abstract

The term “feminist” is a widely used label that is often embraced by women who do not advocate feminism. The wide use of the feminist label in contrast to the declining presence of feminist activism indicates a problem with the development of a third wave of feminism in the United States. In this study, I evaluated trends in feminism in the United States through an analysis of public political discourse. A semantic discourse analysis of political discourse from 1870 to 2011 evaluated a shift in the use of inclusive and exclusive pronoun usage by female political speakers. Speeches compiled for this study were obtained from internet sources such as NPR, C-Span and CNN, and evaluated the oratory of Victoria Woodhull, Geraldine Ferraro, Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann. The results of this study indicated that there was not a strong shift in the use of inclusive and exclusive pronouns overtime, but there was a large growth in both population and diversity of the targeted audience, and this growth was often not accommodated for in the discourse of contemporary female political candidates. The slow shift in inclusive discourse indicated a post-feminist line of thought that questioned the validity of an argument for a third wave of feminist activism in the United States. Political discourse cannot define a cause for post-feminism, but can indicate a downward trend in the influence of feminism as a contemporary cultural movement.

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"Woman un-thinks the unifying, regulating history
that homogenizes and channels forces,
herding contradictions into a single battlefield.
In woman, personal history blends together with
the history of all women,
as well as national and world history"
-Helene Cixous, The Laugh of the Medusa

In an interview with Katie Couric during the midst of her 2008 Vice-Presidential campaign, Sarah Palin referred to herself as a feminist, and in doing so commenced a crusade of new feminism that was embraced by a generation of conservative women that previously feared the feminist label. In the same breath that she accepted the feminist label, Sarah Palin explained what being a feminist meant to her. Palin made no remark about feminism or a movement of women's liberation, but instead sharpened her rhetoric to refer solely to the feminist label and the meaning that she personally assigned to it. Palin's use of the feminist label in application to discourse that did not embrace diversity was problematic to the overall advancement of feminism because it constricted her audience to a privileged sub-sect of females that did not represent the sex of women as a whole.

During her interview with Katie Couric (2008), Palin said that she considered herself a feminist who "believes in equal rights," and said that "that women certainly today have every opportunity that a man has to succeed and to try to do it all anyway" (September 29, 2008). When asked directly to offer her own definition of "being a feminist," Palin replied it would be "someone who believes in equal rights," and "would not stand for oppression against women" (September 29, 2008). Palin left her definition

of being a feminist vague, and in similar fashion to the discourse of Elizabeth Cady Stanton during the late nineteenth century amidst the first wave of feminism and the suffragist movement, the question of 'equal rights for whom' was present in her reasoning. Sarah Palin's opinions on feminism appeared to stem from the very source that initiated any questioning of her being a feminist at all—her gender. Sarah Palin embraced the disparity between male and female roles in the American political system, and used her femininity to cross the gendered lines. In this post-feminist society, being a strong woman is often synonymous with being a feminist. Sarah Palin was a strong woman living in a male dominated society, running for a position of executive power that was never before held by a woman. Palin's status in American society as a white, educated, upper-class citizen allowed her to break the gender line that was still in place for many underprivileged women. This privileged position was what allowed her to overlook the political roots of women's oppression that would have prevented her from gaining political power in the past. The feminist discourse that Palin participated in was not a component of feminism because it was not applicable to all women, but instead was only relevant to the same white, middle class, educated women that shared her privileged position in American society.

Palin's interpretation of what it meant to be a feminist was restricted, and disputed the egalitarianism that the feminist movement strode for. Palin claimed that she believed contemporary women had the ability to "do it all anyway," as in despite of being female, and not because of who we are as women. Palin spoke in the present tense when defining what it meant to be a feminist, implying that feminism was a goal that had already been achieved. She believed that women had every opportunity that men had, and in stating

this belief she engaged in a post-feminist rhetorical platform. By limiting her discourse to embrace the "feminist" label without ever engaging in the topic of "feminism," Palin was able to use her position as a woman to her advantage while adhering to patriarchal norms.

Many women in contemporary American politics relied on the advancements of past feminist movements but did not participate in feminist rhetoric, and Sarah Palin was an example of this trend. While women in powerful political roles were often referred to as feminists, many excluded diversity from their discourse and aimed instead to appeal to women that shared similar political beliefs as themselves. This was demonstrated especially by Sarah Palin, who shaped her discourse specifically towards family oriented mothers much like herself. She did this largely through advertising her own parenting experiences, namely her experience with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA). In her speech to the Republican National Convention (2008) shortly after her nomination as vice-president, Palin re-affirmed her status as the "average hockey mom" and stated that when she first campaigned for City Council, she "didn't need focus groups and voter profiles," because she "knew those voters," and "knew their families, too" (Palin 2008). In this statement, Palin disputed the need to evaluate her audience by claiming that her audience was exactly like herself. For Sarah Palin, appealing to the audience involved only appealing to those that agreed with her. Palin's use of exclusionary and individualistic language functioned as a strong example of the emergence of post-feminism. Palin's language was innately not feminist due to her nature of excluding large populations of females from her audience as she focused more on the women that shared similar values and beliefs to herself. A core of womanhood that is represented in small

exclusionary factions falls short of embracing feminism because it fails to accommodate the differences in personal plight and triumph that women experience across racial, religious and class lines.

A Limited History of Feminist Rhetoric

In "The Personal is Political," Carol Hanisch (1969) wrote about women's use of personal experience in political narrative, political here referring to the overall power structure and relationships in place, and not solely on electoral politics. Hanisch addressed the usage of anecdotal history in the foundation of emerging feminist issues. Women's groups consisted of the exchange of personal narratives relating to a certain topic, such as child care or financial concerns (Hanisch 1969). Hanisch (1969) criticized the common reference to these female exchanges of emotion and experience as therapy, and instead argued that it was the very power structure that was teasing these small movements that was causing the personal hardships to begin with.

Hanisch (1969) found that the anecdotal plights of women were in fact political issues because the problems that these groups of women presented were wide spread across the female population. Campbell (1973) described that during the 1960s and early 1970s when the second wave of feminism was being defined, these small "consciousness raising" groups evolved in which women shared their personal problems with one another, and together they found that the personal frustrations that they experienced within their own lives were common, and were actually political problems (400). According to Campbell (1973) the goals of these small groups were to "create awareness (through shared experiences)" and to show that what was "thought to be personal

deficiencies and individual problems" were instead "common and shared, a result of their position as women" (400). Helene Cixous (1975) echoed this call for human rights several years later when she wrote that "in women, personal history blends together with the history of all women" (1529).

The association of women's rights with equal rights is as old as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848. DuBois and Smith (2007) found that Elizabeth Cady Stanton spoke repeatedly about the rights of all women, but she did so while referring directly to the "political, religious, educational, commercial and social interests of her sex" (238). This was characterized by Lori Ginzberg (2009) in her text "Elizabeth Cady Stanton." Ginzberg (2009) found that from this early moment in the history of feminism, the question of equal rights for whom had been evident. Prominent females within this first wave of American feminism partnered with abolitionist activists such as Frederick Douglass to expand the rights of the vote to all citizens. Ginzberg (2009) presented Stanton's rhetoric as an example of the exclusionary limitations that feminism has been subject to, despite the fact that Elizabeth Cady Stanton had traditionally been seen as an advocate for the rights of all women.

Stanton fought strongly for the right of women to participate in the vote, but she did not fight for the rights of *all* women. Instead, as Ginzberg (2009) argued, her rhetoric was tailored towards the advancement of educated, middle class white women, making her activism a fight for gendered equality along class lines. Ginzberg (2009) criticized Stanton's argument for universal suffrage due to Stanton's outspoken criticism of the fifteenth amendment. Elizabeth Cady Stanton was dissatisfied with the fifteenth amendment due to its exclusion of women, and felt instead that the expansion of the vote

to black men should be withheld until the right was granted to women as well (Ginzberg 2009). Lori Ginzberg (2011) explained that when Stanton fought for the rights of all women, "…she primarily had in mind women much like herself," meaning women that were "white, middle-class, culturally if not religiously protestant, propertied," and also "well-educated" (Ginzberg 2011). Ginzberg (2011) found that Stanton's contribution to women's suffrage was viewed historically as a staple of the foundation of feminism in the United States, but her rhetoric did not encompass the rights of all women. Instead, her language was limited to the implication of privileged women like herself.

Background

Feminist against Feminism

In her book *Feminist Theory, from Margin to Center*, bell hooks (1984) argued that using the term "feminist" as a label without a direct cause created a problem for the future of feminism. Hooks (1984) wrote that women should "avoid using the phrase I am a feminist," which she considered to be a "linguistic structure" that was "designed to refer to some personal aspect of identity and self-definition" (29). In place of the feminist label, hooks (1984) suggested that women could instead state that they "advocate feminism" (29). According to hooks (1984), the use of the term feminist as an individual identifier limited the terms ability to encompass a larger populace. Hooks (1984) argued that the term "feminist" did not connect to a larger framework of political ideology and activism, but instead meant whatever the user molded it into meaning. Hooks (1984) identified a shift taking place within her own generation of feminism, a shift that moved away from a larger unified movement. Hooks (1984) wrote that there has been "undue

emphasis placed on feminism as an identity, or lifestyle" (29). Hooks (1984) continued, explaining that many people resort to "stereotyped perspectives on feminism," and stated that the only way to "revise" the "strategy and direction" of feminism was to deflect "attention away from stereotypes" (29).

According to Gillis, Howie and Munford (2004) the third wave of feminism was only loosely defined as part of a movement. Since the conclusion of the "second wave" of feminism, many different sects of feminism have claimed to be the forefront of the "third wave," but none of the smaller sects were able to encompass the larger interests of women as a whole population. Gillis et al (2004) found that many different sects of feminism gained popularity after the second wave of feminism. Many feminist critics have argued in favor of these smaller sects as being a large part of the future of feminism. According to Gillis et al (2004) this decentralization of the contemporary feminist movement added to the problematic nature of post second wave feminism. Each smaller sect of feminism had difficulty embracing the viewpoints of all women (Gillis et al 2004). While eco-feminism appealed to environmentally minded women, the pro-choice movement appealed instead to a separate group, one largely associated with politically liberal women (Gillis et al 2004). Sarah Palin's "conservative feminist movement" appealed to a largely religious sect of conservative women, while other Latino and Black feminist groups became prominent within those respective cultures (Gillis et al 2004). Sarah Palin repeatedly defended her identity as a feminist, and to separate her individualized feminist label from the first and second wave feminist movement, Palin defended her label as an "emerging, conservative, feminist identity" (Duam 2010).

While the feminist label was often used and embraced by women that may or may not be associated with a larger movement of feminism, the definition of feminism continued to refer to qualities of all females. Feminism was a solitary movement and understanding of one gendered sex outside of race, culture, and socioeconomic issues (Oxford English Dictionary 2011). The term feminism referred to something that was related to the "qualities of females" (feminism v.1). Females, the plural term, implied that something that was inherently feminist adhered to qualities of all females—shared among the gendered sex as a whole unique unit. The term feminist, used as either an adjective or a noun, meant to be involved with feminism or to be "an advocate of feminism" (feminist v.1). "Feminist" was not a solitary label used to define a singular person's ambitions or beliefs, but instead was meant to show agreement with the movement of feminism as a whole.

Differentiating Second Wave, Third Wave and Post-Feminism

Feminism is broken up into waves as a way to organize the movement and differentiate past feminist activism from present and future feminist goals. The waves are a useful tool when analyzing feminism, but they are not an objective form of measurement. Waves are fluid and ill-defined, much unlike a historical era that is defined by the onset of a war or the death of a monarch; the feminist waves are able to encompass trends in feminist activism without enforcing any rigid limitations. Cathryn Bailey (1997) found that the "significance" of using waves to speak about feminism was "not entirely clear" (17). In the ocean, waves, as Bailey (1997) pointed out, are "temporal and proximal," they show "variations in amplitude, duration, intensity, and volume" (18).

According to Bailey (1997), the use of "waves" as a differentiating term also implied "that it is one among others in some sort of succession" (18). In addition, Bailey (1997) found that waves are something that "can be determined only in retrospect" (18). The end of one wave implies the onset of another, but assuming that the next wave immediately picks up where the former left off is problematic to understanding the entire influence of the previous wave.

It is difficult to establish an unquestionable year that marks the end of the second wave of American feminism. Bailey (1997) criticized the argument of feminist scholars that age differentiates the activists of the feminist second wave from those of the third wave. According to Bailey (1997), "women of certain ages tend to have certain experiences and outlooks," and these experiences are going to be inherently different from the opinions of women of different ages (24). Bailey (1997) suggested that young feminists who do not fit in with their mothers in the "second wave" consider themselves to be a "new generation of feminism," instead of immediately embracing the "third wave" terminology (26). Bailey (1997) argued that immediately differentiating the goals of younger feminists as something distinct from the second wave could be problematic to the future of feminism, and it is too difficult to understand the differences between the second wave and the potential third wave so soon following the close of the second wave.

As there is no distinct marker available that can mark the end of the second wave of feminism, cultural trends have been used to demonstrate shifts in attitude among women, as well as changes in the perception of feminism. Kathleen Rowe Karlyn (2003) found that the 1990s marked a time of cultural change in the perception of feminism, particularly in regards to popular culture. Karlyn (2003) noted particularly a 1998 *Time*

Magazine cover that depicted the faces of first and second wave feminist activists including Susan B. Anthony, Betty Freidan and Gloria Steinem in black and white next to a full-color image of the actress Calista Flockhart, star of the television show *Ally McBeal,* with a caption that read "Is Feminism Dead?" (4). Karlyn (2003) suggested that feminism in the 1990s survived on screen through the growth of fictional female protagonists, despite the absence of a feminist movement. Karyln (2003) noted that the second wave of feminism "changed the world young women are growing up in," made evident by the popularity of phrases such as "girl power" and "girls kick butt" (5). According to Karyln (2003), the second wave of feminism placed a lasting imprint on the American culture, particularly upon young women growing up in the 1990s.

Karlyn (2003) found that the traces of feminism exhibited in popular culture in the 1990s did not fit with the second wave of feminism and attributed the shift to a new "wave." However, this definition of third wave feminism is disputed. R. Claire Snyder (2008) argued that the third wave of feminism can be distinguished from the second wave by "the tactical approach" that it presented to many of the "impasses that developed within feminist theory in the 1980s," which implied that the separation between second wave and third wave feminism was a theoretical dispute (175). According to Snyder (2008), the "third wave" of feminism is not characterized by unity, as the first and second waves of feminism were, but instead employed a "dynamic and welcoming politics of coalition" (176). Jenny Coleman (2009) found that defining the state of feminism is often subjective. Coleman (2009) wrote that "depending on what you read, we are either in a post-feminist era or in the third wave of feminism," and that defining feminism objectively may be a difficult task (3). Coleman (2009) argued that the existence of a

"diversity of feminisms" that are often at "tension" and "contradiction" with one another is "not a new phenomenon," but this could perhaps be indicative of the coalition-like mindset of young feminists that has been attributed to a third-wave of feminism (3). Ultimately, it is not questioned as to whether or not the second wave of feminism did end, but specific dates concerning the closure of the movement are disputed, as are the details surrounding the existence of feminism following the second wave.

Diversity and Post-Feminist Rhetoric

While smaller non-profit groups positioned themselves as a representative of minority voices, the larger political parties in the United States were what ultimately shaped the political position of a majority of Americans, both men and women alike (Ranney 1951). As Ranney (1951) argued, this was largely represented by the domination of American politics by the two-party political system. Due to the structure of politics in the United States, the Democratic and Republican parties received the highest priority in political opinion and voice. This occurred despite any disagreement or dissatisfaction that was felt among the American voting population (Ranney 1951). This two-party political structure that Ranney (1951) described was similar to the foundation of feminism that Gillis et al (2004) described. The smaller voices are left unrepresented, because allowing the larger structure to be made up of so many smaller parts created increasing amounts of disparity, and reaching the ultimate goal became more difficult. For Gillis et al (2004) the ultimate goal was an operational third wave of feminism. To overcome this disparity, politicians and feminist activists had to be inclusive of the growing diversity in the United States. For Ranney (1951) the ultimate goal was a successful campaign that wins

the election. The Republican and Democratic parties in the United States competed with one another across religious, racial and class lines to represent the majority of American opinions, and so the women speakers within these parties were often considered to be responsible for the voice of women concerning political issues.

Multiculturalism and diversity in the United States expanded significantly since the initiation of the second wave of feminism in the United States. The tables presented in appendix A of this study demonstrate the population growth among different races and cultures in the United States from 1960 to 1999, and also project this growth from 2010 to 2050. The data displayed in tables one, two and three was presented in "Population Composition by Race and Ethnicity: North America" by Tienda and Morning (2001). The data of Tienda and Morning (2001) showed that from 1960 to 1990 the white population in the United States expanded from 151,932 to 196,043, the black population expanded from 18,872 to 33,088 and the Hispanic population expanded from 6,900 to 31, 265. The rate of growth among both the Hispanic and black populations was much greater than hat of the white population in the United States. Table four shows data collected from the United States Census Bureau in 2009, and displays projections of the population of the United States based on race from 2010 to 2050. The data collected by the United States Census Bureau predicts that from 2010 to 2050 the white in the population in the United States will expand from 200,853 to 203, 347; the black population in the United States was expected to expand from 39,909 to 56,944, and the Hispanic population in the United States will expand from 49,726 to 132,792. The United States Census Bureau (2009) also included multiracial populations, which were expected to expand from 5,499 to 16,183. This addition of multiracial populations further marks the influence of multiculturalism

on a public and national scale (United States Census Bureau 2009). This data showed the enhanced growth of minority cultures in the United States, a trend which opened the United States up to greater expectations of diversity.

In her essay "Hillary Clinton, Sarah Palin, and Michelle Obama: Performing Gender, Race and Class on the Campaign Trail," Ann C. McGinley (2009) argued that due to the vast diversity of women in the United States, many women found that a man's political beliefs were more representative of them and their beliefs than those of their fellow female candidate. During the 2008 campaign, Barack Obama was defined as a feminine male candidate, and McGinley (2009) argued that he was in fact more feminine a candidate than was Hillary Clinton through his performance of female gendered acts. McGinley (2009) explained that during the 2008 Democratic primary election for president many women voted for Barack Obama over Hillary Clinton, which helped him win the democratic nomination and eventually the presidency. In doing this, many women voted for Barack Obama, a male, over Hillary Clinton, a female, despite any feeling of Hillary Clinton's advancement to the presidency being a triumph for women (McGinley 2009).

Contemporary Discourse Studies, Feminism and Sarah Palin

Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin both spoke at their party's National Convention in 2008. While the speeches of the two women were similar in purpose and length, they were delivered in contrasting styles. Christina Young Guest (2010) compared the rhetorical style of these two speeches in her article "Political Feminine Style and the Feminist Implications of the Respective Convention Speeches: Hillary Rodham Clinton

and Sarah Palin." Guest (2010) found that Hillary Clinton's model of speech was delivered in a feminine style, while Palin's was pronouncedly more masculine. Guest (2010) defined this femininity as mixing "both personal and traditional argument styles, thus allowing the rhetor to move between public and private worlds" (22). Guest (2010) defined Hillary Clinton as more feminine due to her ability to use personal anecdotes and apply them fluidly to the political situation, argument and audience that she was a part of at that moment.

Sarah Palin was credited with a great deal of influence on the contemporary political scene after 2008. Hart, Lind and Childers (2011) evaluated this influence of "the Palin style" in their article "The Elusive Style of Sarah Palin and what it Means." Hart et al chronicled the impact that Palin's rhetoric had on contemporary politics since her appearance on the national scene, and specifically credited Palin as having a large and shaping role in the development of the Tea Party movement. While Palin was often endorsed by the Tea Party, she was not considered a leader within the movement and instead distanced herself from the Tea Party since its emergence. The Tea Party was however largely powered by female forces, which presented women in general, and not Sarah Palin alone, at the heart of this specific emerging political trend.

Hart et al (2011) explored Palin's level of insistence in her discourse. Hart et al (2011) used insistence to rank Palin's ability to control a topic and stay focused within an argument. Hart et al (2011) showed common tendencies in Palin's language and showed that these low-insistence tendencies were also prevalent in the rhetoric of many Tea Party activists. Palin's rhetoric indicated trends in contemporary discourse; she was a highly

influential female and therefore acted as a useful indication of societal trends in discourse, but was not the sole marker of that change.

Present Study

Carol Hanisch (2006) explained that she originally wrote "The Personal is Political" (1969) in the midst of heated debate with other feminists over the use of "political therapy" sessions in the formation of feminist discourse during the late 1960s. The argument that Hanisch (1969) presented was problematic in its basic use of logos. Hanisch (1969) compared women as a culture to blacks and workers, thereby classifying blacks and workers as separate groups from her own. In doing this, Hanisch (1969) distanced a large population of her female audience that included black women and female workers, and instead tailored her rhetoric to be relevant to women in similar socioeconomic positions as herself. Hanisch (1969) used the generality of "all women" in an attempt to address her goals for feminism to her entire sex, but while doing so drastically limited her audience to a small demographic of women that had similar racial, economic and social backgrounds as herself— much like Elizabeth Cady Stanton did during the late nineteenth century.

The four tables in appendix A demonstrate that multiculturalism in the United States expanded significantly from the 1970s when the second wave of feminism was at its prime, and are projected to continue expanding through 2050. This embedded diversity among women in American culture altered the ability of a single leader to speak for a mass of people. The idea of feminism as a cultural phenomenon that speaks for all women is therefore increasingly difficult, and will only become more difficult over time.

While class structure diversified political opinions on fiscal grounds, cultural beliefs influenced the position of women along racial and religious grounds as well.

Christina Young Guest (2010) defined the feminine style as being personal, and faulted Palin for her use of outside resources. Instead of relying on her own experiences, Palin campaigned on those of her running mate, consistently deflecting the focus and attention off of herself and on to John McCain. Guest (2010) found that Hillary Clinton's personal rhetoric allowed her to relate with her audience more directly, and Palin in contrast remained a chronically public figure. Rather than the use of personal versus public, Guest's (2010) argument would benefit from the division of inclusive versus exclusive language, as will be analyzed in the speeches of both of these figures in this study.

In her analysis of Sarah Palin, Guest (2010) wrote that Palin "was not successful at extending her argument to women's rights or the interconnectedness of women's roles" (38). Instead Guest (2010) found that by "setting herself up as a solar system of one," Sarah Palin "set the tone for a 'me' versus a 'we' environment" (38). Palin's use of exclusive rhetoric was different from the inclusive nature of Hillary Clinton's rhetoric. Clinton, however, included herself with the feminist movement by aligning herself politically with the beliefs and goals that organically developed out of the second-wave of feminism. Sarah Palin removed herself from that alignment, and often condemned the goals and beliefs of feminism while adopting the same feminist label.

As the Oxford English Dictionary (2011) defined, there is no single definition to being a feminist, or to being a woman.[1] Any movement that was intended to speak for the

[1] This statement is reliant on the 1851 definition of feminism as recorded by the Oxford English Dictionary that feminism pertains to "the qualities of females."

advancement of all women must be rhetorically open to all racial, cultural and religious differences that make every woman unique. Women encompassed a much larger aspect of humanity than one simple label could have accommodated for, and as a result contemporary feminism needed to incorporate the desires, opinions and hardships of women across cultural lines. While the contemporary rhetoric of female politicians in the United States was often misconstrued as feminist discourse, the language more often fell short of 'advocating feminism' and instead was interpreted as feminist because it was spoken by a strong female in a position of power. The feminist movement was tailored towards the advancement of all females, and was not a fight for a single female to gain a position of power. The problem at hand was to identify where the new encompassed feminist identity placed contemporary feminist activism. A "third wave" of feminism was not possible under this ideology without expansion and an inclusion of diversity. As a result, the stereotyped usage of the feminist label within political discourse placed our society in a post-feminist era.

Hart et al (2011) noted the similarity of Palin's rhetorical style with the rhetorical platform of the Tea Party. The possibility was presented that a rise in the prevalence of Palin's style of discourse was related to the overall rise of female activism in politics. Rather than arguing that these larger groups of women were being rhetorically modeled after the style of Sarah Palin, it is more likely that these women spoke in a post-feminist style of which Sarah Palin functioned as an example.

The use of discourse analysis for this study provided me with the opportunity to evaluate the use of inclusive and exclusive language as a signifier of post-feminism. I was not solely interested in the use of exclusive language by female political speakers,

but instead evaluated the use of this language among female politicians to judge the ability of the speaker to include diverse populations in her intended audience. Exclusive language displayed a shift away from a feminist movement, which in connection to a broadened use of the feminist label could be problematic to a future of feminism.

To evaluate the use of exclusive and inclusive language in political speeches overtime I conducted a semantic discourse analysis. The methodology of a semantic discourse analysis fit well with the goals of this paper because it provided a system of measurement for change in language overtime. This study was distinctly different from a rhetorical analysis of campaign motives because I was not concerned with the persuasive abilities of the female candidates. Instead, I evaluated their use of persuasive techniques in addressing their audience to signify a social trend. This is similar to a study of language as a social marker, but I did not conduct this study with the goal of providing a reason for the emergence of post-feminism. Instead, the semantic discourse analysis was used to display a trend in language overtime, without evaluating the social implications of that trend.

The history of feminism, especially regarding a third wave of feminism and post-feminism, is subjective. As Bailey (1997) pointed out, waves are something that can only be determined in retrospect, and not enough time has yet passed to be able to determine objectively the rise and fall of a third-wave of feminism. For the purpose of this paper, I have acknowledged the completion of the second wave of feminism, but have not found enough evidence in either direction to affirm that a third-wave has begun, yet alone completed. Instead, I have allowed for the possibility of a third-wave of feminism while detecting the likelihood of post-feminism in contemporary political discourse.

In the course of this study I examined exclusive language as a signifier of post-feminism, and evaluated the presence of this individualistic rhetorical trend in the speeches of female candidates in the United States since the first female presidential campaign in 1870. The political discourse evaluated for this study encompassed the political speeches of women from 1850 to the modern day. The evaluated speech samples were limited to women running for a position of executive power, and were further limited to national campaigns, including the presidency and vice-presidency. Female politicians running for a position of executive power were the chosen sample for this study due to their embedded association with feminism and their simultaneous distance from the feminist movement. This connection was often a result of their being women campaigning for a position of power in a masculine dominated society, rather than a personal connection with the feminist movement on the part of the individual politician. In addition, females that were running for a position of executive power were fighting to represent a more diverse audience than those running for a representative position of a more confined district. Those running for legislative positions often had the advantage of being exclusive with their rhetoric, as the voting population was confined, but those that positioned themselves in executive position races needed to consider the needs and opinions of a much more diverse base of voters. A campaign for executive office presented a situation where the politician would benefit from the use of inclusive language, but exclusive language was often introduced nontheless. Feminist activists were specifically excluded from this study to eliminate a pro-feminist bias in the analyzed discourse.

The purpose of this study was to demonstrate the prevalence of post-feminist discourse in contemporary American politics, and this was accomplished by evaluating the use of inclusive and exclusive language of female political leaders. Campaign speeches were especially interesting in the evaluation of post-feminist discourse because the political speakers were presenting themselves to a vast audience in hopes of creating a connection with the voter, and ultimately winning a vote. I analyzed the rhetoric used by female political leaders to form this connection with their audience—specifically, whether they used inclusive language that openly invited all listeners to become a part of the political process in a "we are all one" mentality, or exclusive language that limited the relevance of the targeted audience by using an "us versus them" mode of discourse.

I was not concerned with the cause of post-feminism for this study. Instead, my goal was to provide evidence that the post-feminist mode of discourse was active in the political and cultural discourse of the United States. This post-feminist mode of discourse was specifically shown in the discourse of Sarah Palin, whose rhetoric was largely exclusive and focused on self-driven issues. The language and argumentation demonstrated by Sarah Palin showed an out-group mentality that excluded large portions of her audience, and were largely associated with the post-feminist mode of discourse.

Method

Since 1884 when Victoria Woodhull ran for presidential office, there have been over one hundred women to campaign for the presidency, vice presidency and gubernatorial positions alone. Between the years of 1894 and 1924, an additional twenty-

eight women ran for mayoral positions. Since 1924, there have been countless additional campaigns both successful and unsuccessful by women running for mayoral positions.

A comprehensive study of the discourse of all of these women would entail collecting a large sample of the political speeches that these women offered during each of their campaigns, and this was the original goal of this study. Unfortunately, this type of information was not easily accessible and there are a number of roadblocks that I encountered in the process of collecting speeches. Many of the archives that hold the manuscripts of these campaign speeches were non-digital, making an in-depth text analysis of their work exceedingly difficult. In many cases, the speeches that were published digitally were done so only in part, and so the entirety of the speech was not available. In addition, there were a variety of speeches online that have been digitized by private individuals and are not academically reliable resources. While I feel that a comprehensive analysis of a much larger sample of historical speeches by women running for executive power would be incredibly beneficial, due to the difficulty of access to these documents I was forced to reconcile this study to a much smaller scale. The majority of the speeches that I compiled come from internet sources that can be accessed by anyone, and are not from academic databases. Many of these speeches were attained from online news organizations such as C-Span, CNN and NPR. Other speeches were collected from non-official digital archives that have been made public thanks to university research programs and private foundations, such as American Rhetoric and the Margaret Chase Smith Library.

Due to her political popularity and recent success as a vice-presidential candidate on the Republican ticket in 2008, Sarah Palin was used in this study as a primary example

of contemporary female political discourse. There were several other prominent female politicians that may also be considered, such as Hillary Rodham Clinton and Michelle Bachman, but despite the fact that both of these women have made the choice to run for president in the primary race of their respective parties, at the time that this study was conducted neither of these women were officially nominated by their political party for the office of presidency or vice-presidency. Several campaign speeches by both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Michelle Bachmann were included in this study during the evaluation of trends of female discourse as a whole, but these speeches were not being considered individually in the way that Sarah Palin's discourse was. Sarah Palin was the most recent example of a woman on the presidential ticket, and therefore she played the largest role in this study.

The difficulty of compiling political speeches led me to focus on the speeches of key female political candidates. I evaluated a collection of Sarah Palin's speeches from the 2008 campaign that ranged from the date that John McCain announced her as his Vice-Presidential running mate on August 29, 2008 until Election Day, which was November 4, 2008. This was a time period that lasted just over the span of two months, and I drew a total of seven political campaign speeches delivered by Sarah Palin during this period. In addition to the speeches delivered by Sarah Palin, I also focused upon a series of campaign speeches by women running for office during both the first and second wave of the feminist movement, including speeches by Victoria Woodhull, Margaret Chase Smith, Shirley Chisholm and Geraldine Ferraro, and also by contemporary women that ran for the presidential office in the primary party races including both Hillary Rodham Clinton and Michelle Bachmann. These speeches were

considered as a group separate from Sarah Palin, and were also analyzed on an individual basis to show their own usage of exclusive and inclusive language. A total of 20 speeches were analyzed during this study.

In order to conduct a full text analysis of these political speeches, I turned to a text analysis software program distributed by QSR International called NVivo 9. NVivo 9 provided me with complete control over this study by providing the option to analyze any text, video or audio file that I uploaded into the program. NVivo 9 was a basic analysis tool that allowed me to easily determine the frequency of a certain word and the percent in which a theme is present in any particular text, or collection of texts. The NVivo 9 program also quickly determined the words that appeared most frequently in the text, or by a certain speaker. The NVivo program was especially useful in the analysis of inclusive and exclusive language because it assisted in the breakdown of specific words, in addition to present synonyms and similar language that met the theme at hand. This program was also able to quickly determine which words were most frequently connected with other themes, allowing an in-depth analysis of the context surrounding word usage, in addition to the language itself. The QSR International software permitted for the analysis of a particular aspect of any given text instead of analyzing the entire document. The NVivo 9 program quickly converted this collected data into a digestible format that could be easily converted to graphs for additional analysis.

In order to evaluate the premise of feminist and post-feminist discourse in the speeches of female political speakers in the United States, I decided to use inclusive language as a signifier of feminist discourse, and exclusive language as a signifier of post-feminist discourse. From this point, it was necessary to define inclusive and

exclusive language in a form that made the text at hand easy to analyze. In this study, I was not solely analyzing the political or gender binaries that were present in the political platforms. I wanted to judge the ability of the speaker to connect with their audience, and so I evaluated the tactics that were being used to do generate votes during their campaign speeches. One important aspect that fed into the success of the first and second waves of the feminist movement was the ability of the speakers to reach their immediate audience with a message that spoke beyond the limitations of the day's venue.

The goal of this study was to evaluate this aspect of communication in the political discourse of women that campaigned both during the active phases of feminism and also by contemporary women. In addition to speaking to the direct audience that was present at a political gathering or rally, the audience for these female speakers encompassed all registered voters in the United States. In the case of Victoria Woodhull, the voting base was limited to men, but as women were part of her audience I evaluated her ability to include both genders. Though the attributes of a certain venue may provide similar characteristics among the people that are directly in the audience, for contemporary speakers the speeches were televised, meaning that the audience was much broader than one would expect. So, when I examined inclusive and exclusive language in the discourse of these female speakers, I analyzed the ability of these women to connect with the broadest audience possible and to not enforce arbitrary limitations on the scope of their audience by introducing an "us versus them" mentality. This was done through the use of evaluating labels, egalitarian and individualistic language, and also the use of simple pronouns such as "I," "we," "you," "our," and "them."

Results

The results of this study showed that exclusive language was used by women running for executive office throughout the history of American feminism. The largest difference between the discourse of the women campaigning for presidential and vice presidential positions since Victoria Woodhull's campaign in 1870 was the intended confines of the audience. Despite the growth of diversity among voters, total voting population, and distribution of the political speeches through mediums such as television and the internet, contemporary female politicians spoke to more confined audiences than did women during the first and second waves of feminism. Contemporary female politicians tended to exclude those within their own voting population. The results particularly displayed this trend in the language of Sarah Palin (2008), who spent three percent of her political discourse stating the pronoun "I," which was evidence of her individualistic perception of her audience being like herself.

One of the more common pronoun occurrences throughout the discourse of all of the speeches analyzed was the pronoun "our." The limitations within the referents of this pronoun showed severe differences in the use of inclusivity and exclusivity by the speakers. Victoria Woodhull (1870) used the pronoun "our" 82 times in the course of the one speech evaluated, and Sarah Palin (2008) used the word "our" 202 times in the course of seven evaluated speeches. A word tree of the term in the speeches of both women showed clearly the referents to which the women were speaking while using the term. Image 1 in Appendix C displays the word tree of Victoria Woodhull's (1870) language, and showed her use of "our" in the two speeches evaluated. Likewise, the word tree of Sarah Palin (2008) in image 2 in Appendix C showed her use of the word "our" in

the Republican National Convention speech and also her initial speech after being introduced as the vice-presidential running mate by John McCain. This chart showed 56 uses of the pronoun "our" by Sarah Palin (2008), as the full 202 instances were difficult to view in word tree format. The results displayed in these images showed clearly that the use of the pronoun "our" by Victoria Woodhull (1870) was used to refer to the entire nation of American citizens, while Sarah Palin (2008) used the term to refer more specifically to herself, her family, her running mate, and her political party.

While the pronoun "our" is naturally inclusive, it was used by Sarah Palin (2008) in an exclusive fashion. When Palin (2008) used the pronoun "our," she did so to refer to her in-group— those that she surrounded herself with and that agreed with her personal beliefs. She used the term consistently to refer to her family and her political party. Those outside of that limited arena were excluded from her discourse, and in large measures were not addressed by Sarah Palin (2008) at all. Sarah Palin's (2008) discourse showed a motivation to address those that agreed with her politically. Palin (2008) made those that agreed with her feel empowered by placing that specific group of voters in her in-group, thereby encouraging further exclusivity on part of the voters as well.

In addition to the pronoun "our," the pronoun "them" was used by contemporary female candidates to refer to the collection of voters that were directly excluded from the in-group that was reinforced by these candidates. The use of the word "them" was particularly employed by Michelle Bachmann (2011) and Sarah Palin (2008) during their campaign speeches. Michelle Bachmann (2011) used the pronoun "them" to refer to specific groups that she aligned herself with. In her 2012 candidacy announcement for president, Bachmann (2011) aligned herself with specific in-groups, including tea-

partiers, social conservatives and fiscal conservatives. The use of the pronoun "them" by Sarah Palin (2008) and Michelle Bachmann (2011) was displayed in Image 3 in Appendix C, and showed the 39 uses of the term by the two women in the nine combined speeches that were analyzed. The results showed that the use of the term "them" by Sarah Palin (2008) and Michelle Bachmann (2011) was used to reinforce party labels and to exclude different political groups.

Sarah Palin (2008) used the pronoun "them" in her speech to refer directly to those with whom she had political disagreements. Instead of referring to political policies and decisions that she disagreed with, Palin referred to the people that employed those opinions. Rather than condemning a tax that she did not like, she condemned the politicians that proposed that tax. While pushing forward her own political agenda, Sarah Palin (2008) did not counter other political ideas, but instead focused her rhetoric to attack the people who were behind those ideas, employing a form of ad hominem argumentation. In doing this, Sarah Palin (2008) focused on excluding people and not on debating political ideas.

Palin (2008) and Bachmann's (2011) language focused on becoming part of a certain political group, and in doing so excluded others that were not part of that determined group. Michelle Bachmann's (2011) use of the term "them" was one of the most direct uses of exclusive language displayed by contemporary female politicians. Michelle Bachmann (2011) demonstrated this limited appeal to her audience in her Presidential campaign announcement speech on July 27, 2011 when she stated that her voice was comprised of "peace through strength Republicans," "fiscal conservatives," "social conservatives" and the "tea party movement" (July 2011). After each one of these

groups, Bachmann (2011) stopped and repeated the phrase that she was "one of them" (July 2011). In this statement Bachmann (2011) clearly distanced herself from those that did not consider themselves one with the groups she was naming. Bachmann attempted to include herself with specific in-groups, but in doing so excluded those that did not completely agree with the moral and political platforms of those groups. Rather than being inclusive of all voters and portraying her political beliefs as beneficial for all of America, Bachmann (2011) excluded any outsiders and used an individualistic perception to reinforce an "us versus them" mentality.

The use of the pronoun "them" by female political candidates during the second wave of American feminism was much less common. In the six analyzed speeches performed by Margaret Chase Smith (1964), Shirley Anita Chisholm (1972) and Geraldine Anne Ferraro (1984) between the years of 1964 and 1984 there were only eight uses of the pronoun "them." The word tree of this usage is displayed in Image 4 of Appendix C. Like Victoria Woodhull's (1870) use of the pronoun "our," the use of "them" during the second wave of feminism was inclusive of large groups of voters. As the results of this study indicated, four of the uses of the term "them" were spoken by Geraldine Ferraro (1984), the vice-presidential candidate for the Democratic Party. She used the term "them" to refer to businesses and to flags, not to voters that did not agree with her political platform. The other two references of the exclusive "them" pronoun by Geraldine Ferraro (1984) referred to American children, people who were not able to vote in the national election and so were automatically excluded from the audience of American voters. Ferraro (1984) closed her speech saying "The generation before ours kept faith with us, and like them, we will pass on to you a stronger, more just America"

(1984). Despite its use of the term "them," this statement displayed an egalitarian attitude, one that was inclusive of all ages and all people that share the earth.

Discussion

My evaluation of political discourse is subject to a number of potential threats to the internal validity of the subjects being evaluated, including historical factors. Factors such as the education, financial freedom, and political ideology of the candidates, in addition to the actual composition of the speeches that are performed all influenced the personal growth of the women I have evaluated, and those are factors that I cannot evaluate with much certainty. Several women whose oratory I evaluated during the course of this study participated in feminist activism, though they did not regard themselves as feminist activists. For example, Jason Jones (2009) argued that Victoria Woodhull used the "New Departure" rhetorical style, which asserted that "the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments granted women citizenship and thus the right to vote" (352). According to Jones (2009), Woodhull was an active part of the "free love" movement, and used her political influence for the cause of "women's rights" (353). While Woodhull was a political speaker and was not a direct activist for the first wave of American feminism, it must be acknowledged that Woodhull aligned herself with other feminists during that time, and so presented a different perspective than later female political candidates like Michelle Bachmann and Sarah Palin, who spoke out in opposition to acts of contemporary feminist activism (Guest 2010).

In this study I evaluated women political candidates from a variety of political backgrounds, including candidates from both the Democratic and Republican parties.

While the feminist movement often aligned politically with the platform of the liberal candidates, I find that separating the women by political partisanship and granting the women of the Democratic parties more allowance with their feminist rhetoric is problematic to an inclusive evaluation of feminist discourse. Instead, party alliance is a factor that I intentionally did not control for during the course of this evaluation and this may impact the internal validity of the speeches I analyzed. Another potential barrier that must be considered is the use of speech writers among the female candidates evaluated in this study. It is difficult to rule with any certainty whether a speech was composed in its entirety by the speaker. There are a wide variety of factors that could influence the composition of a speech, both personal and political. The use of a male speech writer is one example of a threat to the validity of the speeches that I needed to consider. For example, According Massimo Calabresi (2008), the acceptance speech presented by Sarah Palin at the Republican National Convention in 2008 was composed by Matthew Scully, a professional speech writer who composed oratory for male politicians such as George W. Bush. According to Calabresi (2008), the speech presented by Sarah Palin was written by Scully the week prior to Palin's announcement as the vice-presidential candidate. When Scully composed the speech, he did not know that the speech would be delivered by Sarah Palin, a woman, and wrote the speech to specifications requested by the McCain campaign (Calabresi 2008). The personal biographical information about Palin that was delivered in her acceptance speech on September 3, 2008 was also written by Scully, who chose to highlight Palin's PTA background to present her as "an average mainstream American" (Calabresi 2008). As Calabresi suggested that Palin's acceptance speech is not a genuine sample of her own oratory, I question the validity of this speech

within my study. However, Palin took credit for the speech and delivered it herself so I continue to classify Palin's speech as a sample of female political oratory. The use of a speech writer is a contemporary complication to the evaluation of political rhetoric that must be acknowledged in the study of political speeches. It would be beneficial to the study of feminist political rhetoric to conduct archival research of past female politicians, thereby evaluating the source of the speeches delivered by each of the women evaluated, but that is beyond the scope of this study.

There are a number of factors that could pose threats to the external validity of this study. While I have evaluated the discourse of female political candidates to gauge the progress and decline of feminist influence on popular opinion, I do not directly associate the discourse of female political candidates with feminism. The women evaluated in this study were not recognized as feminist activists and were not impacting the internal progress of the feminist movement. The role of the female politician may at times cross with the platform presented by the feminist movement, but the two are not intrinsically attached. I have evaluated the discourse of female political candidates as a marker of larger societal trends. I have used the discourse of political candidates because they speak to issues that personally affect their audience, which is the voting population and as such a large sample of American citizens—both male and female. It is difficult to determine the cultural opinion of citizens of the United States from the late-nineteenth century to 2012 without excluding certain populations, and as a result certain populations are excluded from this analysis, such as non-voting citizens, immigrants and American citizens who had the right to vote. I chose to evaluate female candidates for federal executive office because each had to match the primary national opinion of the time they

were running for office. Their discourse cannot accommodate the opinions of all Americans, but their voices are more specialized to popular feelings than other groups may be. The discourse of these female political candidates can only act as a reflection of larger cultural trends, and not alone as an example of cultural opinions.

When setting out to study the impact that feminism has had on national opinion I needed to find a singular resource that incorporated the attitude of the entire population. Limiting the study of feminist discourse to those who are participating in the feminist movement disenfranchises the voices of a majority of the population. By evaluating the discourse of women campaigning for national office, I avoided this exclusionary limitation. However, political discourse is not able to speak for the internal opinions of members within the feminist movement, those that are driving the movement itself. Instead of gauging the internal discourse used by feminist activists, my study can reflect upon the influence that feminism had on the American culture at that time. The structure of the American political system allows the general population to set a tone that politicians match to present themselves as more electable. There are many other sources that could reflect the popular opinion of American culture, including media, entertainment and literary outlets, but none of these resources accommodate all aspects of the American public in the way that politicians address the voting population, which is why these aspects of political conversation were not incorporated into this study. I do not imply that political discourse can speak for feminism, but my evaluation can attest to the influence feminism had on the larger culture. However, this assertion is also subject to potential threats to external validity because I have not evaluated the mutual impact that political discourse and feminist activism have had on one another. The degree of

influence must especially be evaluated in the case of Victoria Woodhull, who campaigned for the Presidency at the early stages of the first wave of feminism in the United States. It is impossible to say to what degree Woodhull was inspired by the feminist movement, and to what degree Woodhull's political action inspired activism within the feminist movement. These are factors that were not accounted for in this small study. Instead, the discourse of the female candidates was considered without temporal relevance. I evaluated the speeches chosen purely out of the simple criteria accounted for, which was that they were performed by women running for executive federal office in the United States. My conclusions cannot be extrapolated to imply a demise of the entire feminist movement, but may indicate a trend towards post-feminism that was reflected in the discourse of female political candidates.

When I speak of post-feminism, I am referring to a mindset of feminist motive, theory and ideology that is assimilated into the larger population, without there being any participation in feminism itself. In a post-feminist society, feminism is ever-present, but is not a driving force of thought or activism. Feminism is understood, but not necessarily practiced. My evaluation of political discourse does not predict the future of feminism, or lack of a future for feminist activism, but instead can point to the degree to which feminist thought is accepted and disregarded in popular use. My study is subject to the understanding that wide cultural acceptance measures the success of an activist movement. The results of this study are not concerned with the success of a sculpted feminist movement, but instead the degree to which that movement has been penetrated into the popular cultural mentality. The approval or disapproval of a particular platform is not as important as the overall acknowledgement of the movement among the general

population. Political discourse can gauge the degree to which a rhetorical platform has been assimilated into the general population, but not the degree of activism that is taking place within that particular movement.

Avenues for Further Research

There are a variety of questions that emerge out of this study that reach beyond the scope of this project. An expansion of this study would include a comprehensive analysis of the political speeches of all women that have run for executive office in the United States, rather than a selected sample based upon availability. The confines of this study limited the analyzed texts to women running for presidential and vice-presidential positions, but there are a variety of other executive-office positions that would be worth considering, including gubernatorial and mayoral races in which women have had a more prevalent role in the United States. Other rhetorical factors besides inclusive and exclusive language may influence the progress of feminism and would be worthy of consideration within the speeches of female political candidates, including religion, activism, and policy-specific objectives such as education or fiscal strategy. Excluded from this study is the role of political media in shaping the external perceptions of women running for executive office, but this is another interesting rhetorical influence that is worth further exploration. It would also be beneficial to analyze the discourse of female political candidates in contrast to their male opponents to gain a more precise understanding of gendered differences.

Feminism is an international objective that expands beyond the United States, as well as beyond the political sphere. To fully analyze the progress of feminism and post-

feminism since the origination of the movement it is important to analyze all areas of life and communication that women take part in, including media publications, literature, music and new media as well. The goal of this study is to analyze the trends present in political discourse and post-feminism, but in order to obtain a more conclusive understanding about the development of post-feminism, a more in depth analysis of this material would be required.

Conclusion

Egalitarianism against Individualism

Feminism in the United States progressed under the constrained audience that prominent feminist leaders identified with. Perhaps due to the exclusion of entire populations of females, the feminist movement has not been applicable to all women. Instead, as bell hooks (1984) argued, the use of limited discourse and exclusive language excluded many diverse female groups that could not identify with the limited demographic that the movement directly addressed. Contemporary American culture is made up of a diverse population, and this diversity must be accommodated for in order for a future feminist movement to prosper. This also is true for political candidates that have wished to expand their voting base to a majority of the electorate population, which is crucial for political success. Multicultural diversity in the United States has expanded since 1960 and will continue to expand based upon population projections from 2010 to 2050, as is demonstrated by tables 1-4 in Appendix A. Helene Cixous (1971) wrote that "in woman, personal history blends together with the history of all women, as well as national and world history" (1529), but to this I would add that it is the history of the

world with all diverse cultures, races, religions and morals that comprise the history of women.

As defined, feminism was a bi-partisan movement for the advancement of all women (Oxford English Dictionary 2011). To evaluate Sarah Palin (2008) purely on her political agenda and rule her as being "against" feminism is inherently problematic because doing so involves excluding Palin (a woman) from the feminist audience. During the 2008 campaign Gloria Steinem (2008), a prominent feminist from the American second wave spoke out against Sarah Palin claiming that Palin (2008) "shares nothing but a chromosome with Hillary Clinton." Steinem (2008) did not blame Sarah Palin for the attention that she received, and did not accuse her of being against women (Steinem 2008). Instead, Steinem (2008) reacted more harshly to men like John McCain, Rush Limbaugh and James Dobson that did not understand the difference in the political placement of an educated woman such as Hillary Clinton and a severely less educated "fill in" like Sarah Palin (Steinem 2008). While the political beliefs of Hillary Clinton fell in line with the public interpretation of feminist thought, the partisan opinions of these two women did not play a role in the rhetorical structure of how they addressed their audience and formed their arguments.

The rhetorical and political division between Palin (2008) and Clinton (2008) seems to be largely one of egalitarianism opposed to individualism. Clinton used the opinion and placement of her audience to shape her discourse so to be a true representative of the larger group that she represented. Clinton (2008) used anecdotal references as external reasons for why she must continue working towards a larger goal. Hillary Clinton (2008) expanded her discourse to include diversity among different races,

age groups, religious beliefs and fiscal situations, while Palin (2008) constricted her address to a small percentage of the American public.

As this study demonstrates, Hillary Clinton (2008), unlike Sarah Palin (2008), used open-ended discourse. Rather than focusing on herself and her own opinions during her speech, Clinton (2008) posed questions to her audience and anecdotally referred to voters across a number of different personal and financial situations that differed greatly from her own. This trend was portrayed often by Clinton (2008) throughout political speeches during the campaign process, and was specifically represented during her August 27, 2008 speech at the Democratic National Convention. Rather than simply addressing her audience, Clinton (2008) allowed her audience to fully shape her political discourse. Clinton's (2008) use of anecdotes during the Democratic National Convention was strongly characterized by diversity. Clinton (2008) rhetorically became one with her audience as she described individual voters that she had been recently influenced by, referring to a single mom, a young soldier and a young child concerned about his family's finances after his mother had lost her job. Clinton (2008) used the characterization of diversity in her audience to explain why she was running for the presidency. Clinton (2008) explained her candidacy as being driven by the motive "to fight for an America defined by deep and meaningful equality—from civil rights to labor rights, from women's rights to gay rights, from ending discrimination to promoting unionization to providing help for the most important job there is: caring for our families. To help every child live up to his or her God-given potential" (27 Aug 2008). Clinton's (2008) rhetorical platform remained firm in her egalitarian stance for the benefit and advancement of all Americans.

This study demonstrates that Palin's (2008) use of anecdotal evidence was placed largely within her discourse as reminders to her audience that she was doing what they have asked of her—as a *reassurance* to her political goals rather than something that was *shaping* her political goals. Instead of using anecdotal evidence to profile her voters, Palin (2008) used them to further describe herself. At the Republican National Convention in August of 2008 Palin quoted a reference to Harry Truman, "we grow good people in our small towns, with honesty, sincerity, and dignity" (Palin 2008). Rather than using this as an introduction to the type of voters she was appealing to, Palin applied the quote to herself saying "I grew up with those people… I was just your average hockey mom and signed up for the PTA because I wanted to make my kids' public education better" (30 Aug 2008). Palin (2008) referred throughout her speech to the type of small town 'common man' voter that she is appealing to as "they," and this directly added distance between herself and her audience. Palin's (2008) use of the pronouns "them" and "they" excluded those that she was talking about as separate from those that she was talking to. Sarah Palin (2008) used her audience as externalized encouragement, while Hillary Clinton (2008) spoke to her audience as internalized motivation. Clinton's (2008) discourse was egalitarian in nature. She embraced diverse cultures and situations and represented each equally so that everyone in her audience was able to personally identify with her speech. Palin's (2008) discourse was contrastingly individualistic in that she represented herself and her personal beliefs in her own discourse, which thereby distanced the audience from her speech.

At the Democratic National Convention in August of 2008, Hillary Clinton congratulated Barack Obama on his nomination as the Democratic candidate for

President. During this speech, Clinton (2008) focused all political attention away from herself and instead addressed her audience of supporters and encouraged them to vote for her previous opponent, Barack Obama. Clinton (2008) directly addressed her audience during her speech, creating a discourse of two way communication and conversation. Clinton (2008) stated to her supporters: "you taught me so much, you made me laugh, and you even made me cry. You allowed me to become part of your lives. And you became part of mine" (27 Aug 2008). Clinton's (2008) style of rhetoric as represented here was open, and she was able to freely address all aspects of her audience personally. Also, Clinton (2008) did not address her audience to explain what she was able to do for them, but instead personally involved her audience by crediting them with the ability to openly influence and shape her. Clinton (2008) used this open style of discourse in a way that advocated a future of feminism through an acceptance of diversity and equal rights. Clinton did not attempt to portray herself as part of any contemporary feminist movement, but instead applauded the past accomplishments of women's rights activists without evoking any labels.

Hillary Clinton (2008) celebrated the nineteenth amendment and women's right to vote while using a post-feminist model of egalitarian rhetoric. As Ginzberg (2011) explained, when Elizabeth Cady Stanton fought for the right to vote during the late nineteenth century she was largely focused on individualized motives for women like herself. Clinton (2008) addressed the achievements that Stanton and her peers worked towards during her speech, saying:

> After so many decades- 88 years ago on this very day—the Nineteenth amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote would be forever enshrined in our Constitution. My mother was born before women could vote. But in this election my daughter got to vote for her mother for President. This is the story of

> America. Of women and men who defy the odds and never give up (27 Aug 2008).

Unlike Stanton, Clinton (2008) embraced the overall achievement of our society through women gaining the right to vote, and was not entirely focused on the advancement of women alone. Clinton (2008) spoke these words after losing the Democratic primary election and was in this situation endorsing Barack Obama for President. In many ways, Clinton's (2008) rhetorical situation echoes that of Stanton in the nineteenth century, as Stanton felt that she lost in her political activism to Frederick Douglass, a black man and former slave, as black men were given the right to vote and women were not. Stanton reacted negatively to this. Ginzberg (2011) explained that rather than being grateful for the advancement of black men within her society, Stanton was instead frustrated with the lack of progress for women. Hillary Clinton (2008) could have become the first woman President of the United States, but when she found that she was not the candidate preferred by her political party she quickly turned around and endorsed her former opponent Barack Obama, a black male, and spoke to her audience excitedly for the new possibilities America faced.

Movement towards Post-Feminism

In her article "The Rhetoric of Women's Liberation," Karlyn Kohrs Campbell (1973) outlined the rhetorical structure that defined women's liberation on stylistic grounds. Campbell (1973) wrote that "women's liberation is characterized by rhetorical interactions that emphasize affective proofs and personal testimony, participation and dialogue, self-revelation and self-criticism, the goal of autonomous decision making through self-persuasion, and the strategic use of techniques for 'violating the reality

structure'" (Campbell 403). Campbell's (1973) definition of feminist rhetoric was similar to that posed in this study. Campbell (1973) identified the need to address diversity, to be personal with the audience, and encouraging towards open dialogue between leaders of a movement and the followers, or the masses. Campbell (1973) formed her evaluation of feminist rhetoric by evaluating the discourse that surrounded her at the height of the second wave of feminism during the early 1970s. Campbell (1973) continued this argument in her essay by saying:

> The only effective response to the sensation of being threatened existentially is a rhetorical act that treats the personal, emotional and concrete directly and explicitly, that is dialogic and participatory, that speaks from personal experience to personal experience. Consequently, the rhetoric of women's liberation includes numerous essays discussing the personal experiences of women in many different circumstances: black women, welfare mothers, older women, factory workers, high school girls, journalists, unwed mothers, secretaries, and so forth (404).

In accordance with Campbell's (1973) evaluation, the rhetoric of feminism was intended to incorporate the desires and needs of all women, but the discourse of feminist leaders fell short of this. Despite the premise of the feminist movement as a source advancement of all women, many women more strongly associated with the advocacy of other minority groups, such as along racial or religious lines, and often did not feel that feminism was a movement that they can consider themselves a part of. Campbell (1973) discussed the tendency of the women that would meet in consciousness raising groups to discuss diversity among women. Campbell (1973) explained that the women that attended these meetings were generally privileged and not of minority status themselves, and instead of "incorporating" diversity, they merely "discussed" it (404). Feminist movement leaders often used limited rhetoric that spoke largely to audiences that were comprised of women similar to the speaker in all or most cultural, racial and fiscal circumstances. Bell hooks

(1984) discusses the exclusion of diversity within feminism, noting that the "ideology of sisterhood as expressed by contemporary feminist activists indicated no acknowledgement that racist discrimination, exploitation, and oppression of multi-ethnic women by white women had made it impossible for the two groups to feel they shared common interests or political concerns" (49). While diversity remained a subject of essays within the discourse of women's liberation, diverse cultures were not often represented in the movement and activism of feminism.

Unlike Hart et al (2011), this study does not attempt to define a cause for the emergence of post-feminist rhetoric. Instead, this study acknowledges a larger trend within feminist discourse, along with that of other, non-feminist forms of public discourse. Contemporary political discourse reflects a larger trend towards exclusionary rhetoric. This is a trend that does not accommodate for the growth of diversity in the United States, which indicates a reduced impact of feminism in the public sphere. A greater influence of feminism would likely result in enhanced public perception and use of egalitarian and inclusionary discourse when speaking to diverse populations of people.

Since the origination of the feminist movement in the mid-nineteenth century, a solid foundation of feminist rhetoric has existed in the discourse of prominent female speakers, but often this discourse has fallen short of encompassing the needs and desires of all women. Even the foundational speakers involved in past movements of feminism have failed to tailor their discourse to the participatory rhetoric that was required to fully embrace the diversity of women, and this was portrayed by the limited audience of both Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Carol Hanisch. Contemporary women political leaders such as Sarah Palin used the benefits achieved through past movements of women's liberation

and embraced the feminist label while rejecting the foundational attributes of feminist rhetoric. This tendency seems problematic to the future meaning of the feminist label, and led to the separation of the term "feminist" from the movement of feminism. Other contemporary female political speakers, like Hillary Clinton, embraced participation and dialogue within their discourse without labeling themselves as feminists, instead often using the term "women's rights" due to the vague and undefined connotation that the term "feminist" developed overtime. This study has demonstrated how the juxtaposition between the feminist label and feminist rhetoric has resulted in a discourse of post-feminism that is defined more by the differences in culture, race, religion and economic status of all people than by the subjective advancement of one particular minority group.

Appendix A

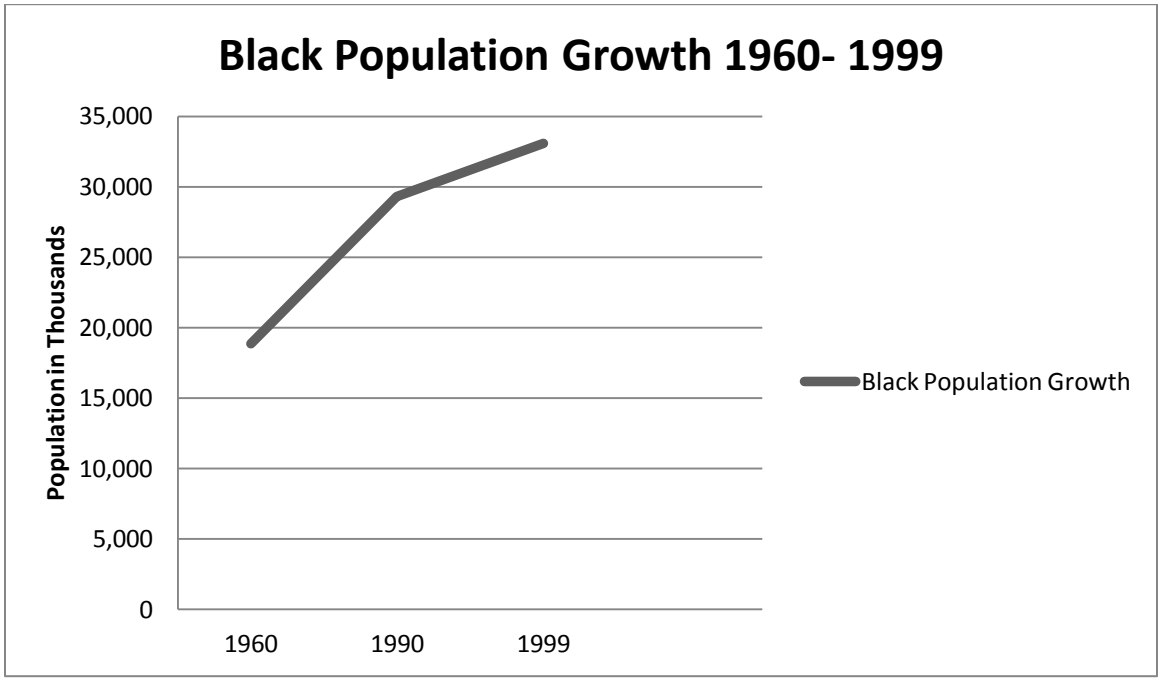

Table 1

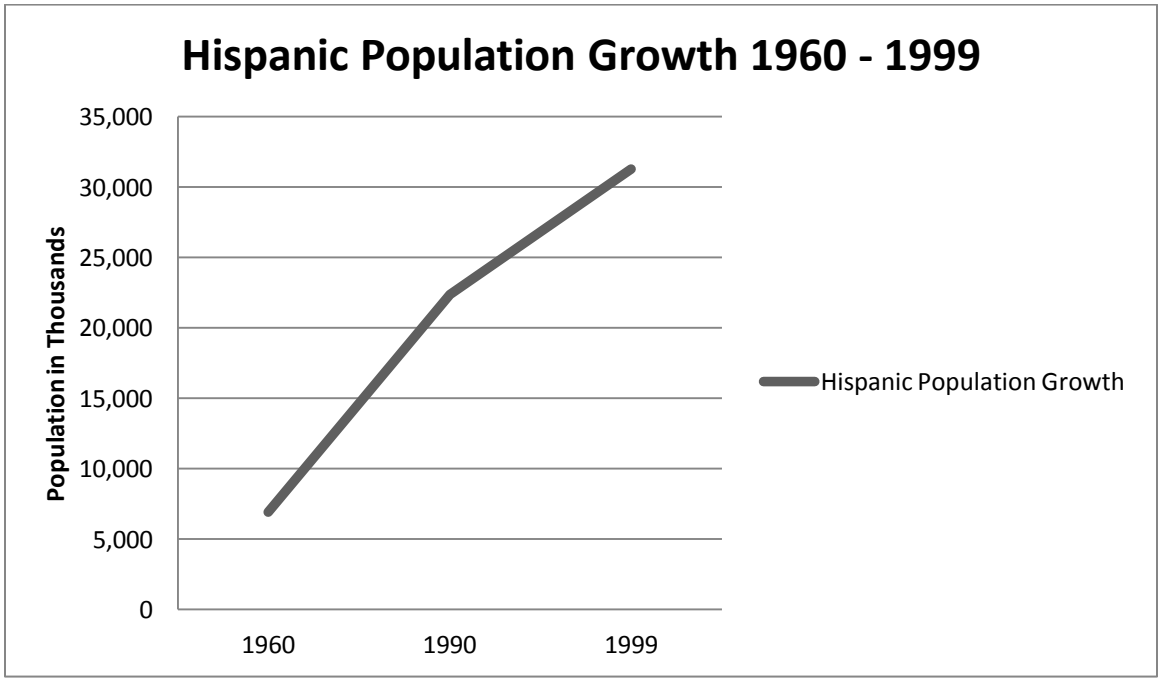

Table 2

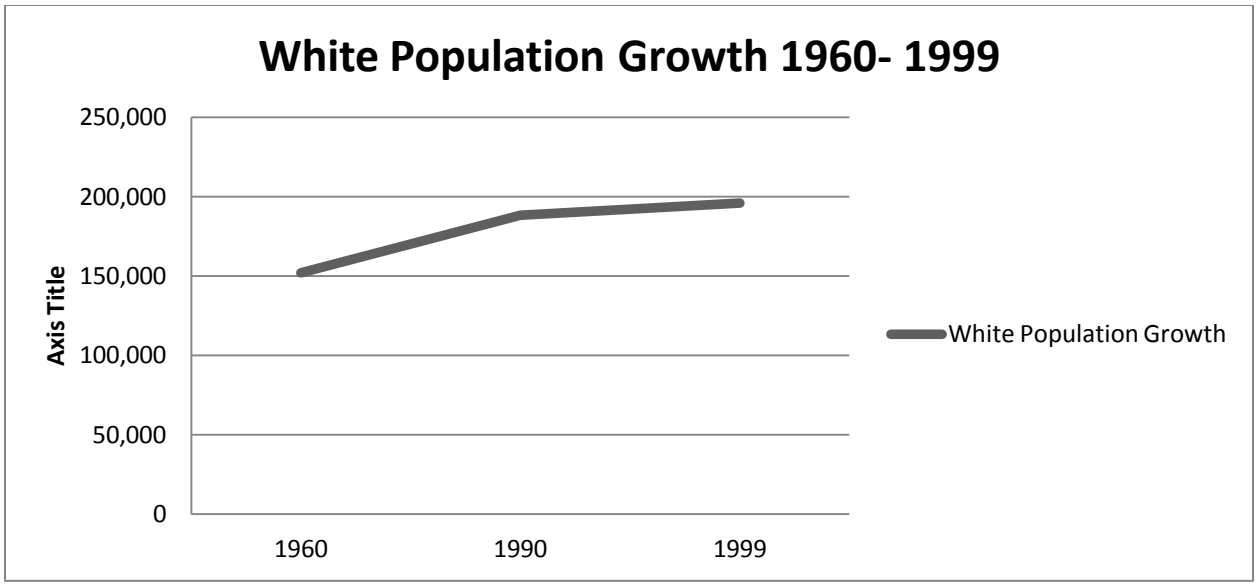

Table 3

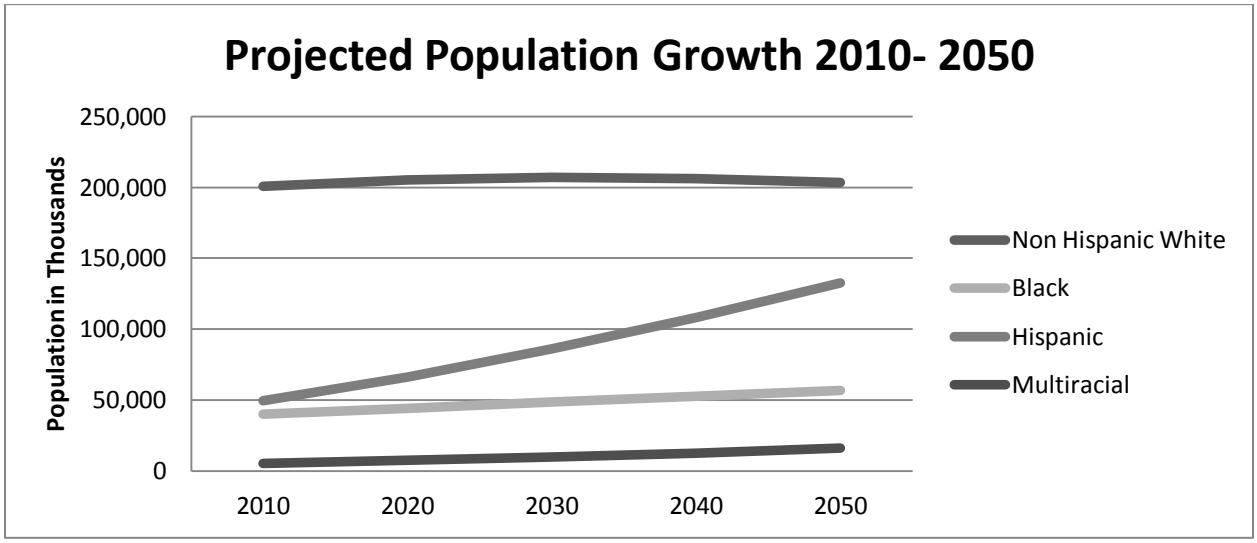

Table 4

Appendix B

Provided below is a list of the speeches evaluated using the Nvivo9 analysis software provided by QSR International:

Bachmann, M. (2011, June) *Announcement of 2012 Presidential Run.* Speech presented at Waterloo Women's Club, Waterloo, Iowa.

Bachmann, M. (2011, August) *Iowa Straw Poll Speech*. Speech presented at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa.

Bachmann, M. (2011, September) *Response to President Obama's Speech to a Joint Session of Congress.* Speech presented at Capitol Hill, Washington D.C.

Chisholm, S. (1969, May) *Equal Rights for Women*. Speech presented to the United States House of Representatives, Washington D.C.

Chisholm, S. (1970, August) *For the Equal Rights Amendment*. Speech presented to the United States House of Representatives, Washington D.C.

Chisholm, S. (1972, January) Statement *of Candidacy for the office of President of the United States*. Speech presented in New York, New York.

Clinton, H. (2008, March) *Speech on Primary Results*. Speech presented in Columbus, Ohio.

Clinton, H (2008, June) *Election Night Remarks*. Speech presented in New York, New York.

Ferraro, G. (1984, July) *Speech Accepting the Democratic Vice Presidential Nomination*. Speech presented at the Democratic National Convention, San Francisco, California.

McKinney, C (2008, July) *Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speech*. Speech presented at the Green Party Convention, Chicago, Illinois.

Palin, S. (2008, August) *Vice-presidential Selection Speech*. Speech presented in Dayton, Ohio.

Palin, S. (2008, September) *The Republican National Convention*. Speech presented at the Xcel Energy Center, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

Palin, S. (2008, October) *Remarks by Governor Sarah Palin on Achieving Strategic Energy Independence.* Speech presented at Xunlight Corporation Headquarters, Toledo, Ohio.

Palin, S. (2008, October) *Remarks by Governor Sarah Palin on the McCain-Palin Commitment to Children with Special Needs.* Speech presented in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Palin, S. (2008, October) *A Road to Victory Rally*. Speech presented in Clearwater, Florida.

Palin, S. (2008, October) *Victory 2008 Rally*. Speech presented in Carson City, Nevada.

Palin, S. (2008, October) *Campaign Speech by Governor Sarah Palin*. Speech presented at Cambria County War Memorial Arena, Johnstown, Pennsylvania.

Smith, M.C. (1950, June) A *Declaration of Conscience*. Speech presented to the United States Senate, Washington D.C.

Smith, M.C (1953, June) *Woman, the Key Individual of our Democracy*. Speech presented at Westbrook Junior College, Portland, Maine.

Woodhull, V. (1871, November) *And the Truth shall make you Free*. Speech presented at Steinway Hall, Manhattan, New York.

Appendix C

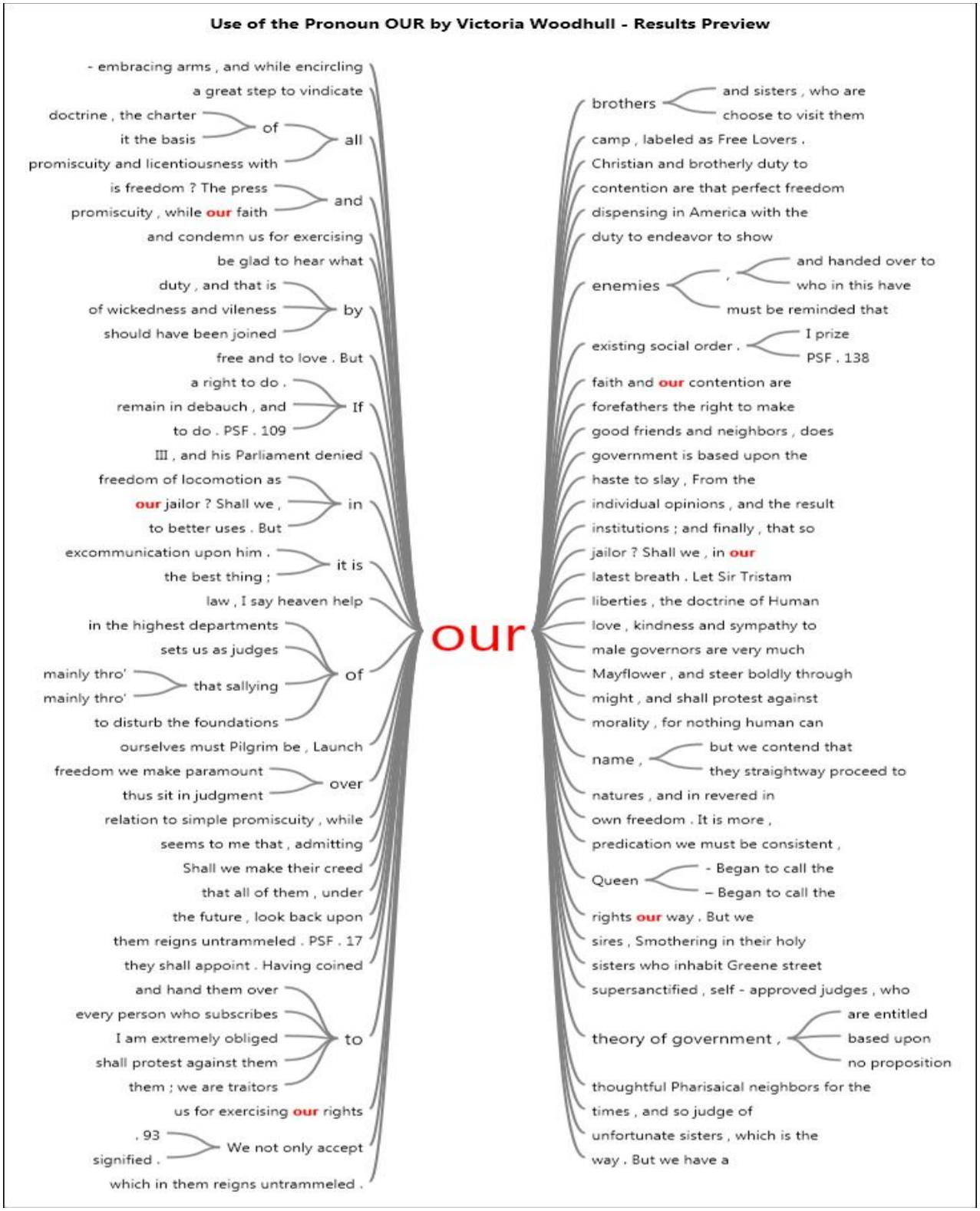

Image 1

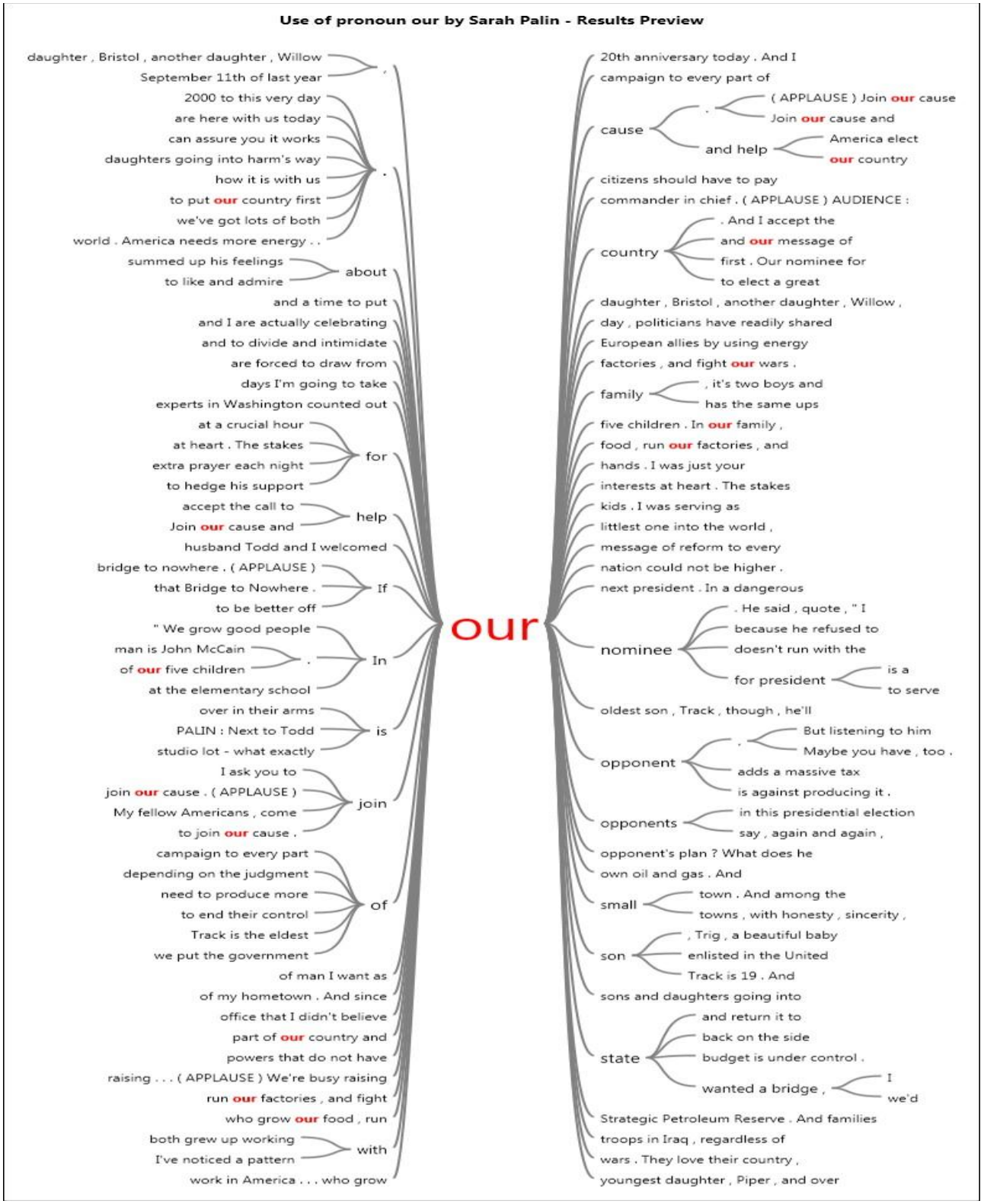
Use of pronoun our by Sarah Palin - Results Preview
our
daughter , Bristol , another daughter , Willow
September 11th of last year
2000 to this very day
are here with us today
can assure you it works
daughters going into harm's way
how it is with us
to put our country first
we've got lots of both
world . America needs more energy . .
summed up his feelings
to like and admire
about
and a time to put
and I are actually celebrating
and to divide and intimidate
are forced to draw from
days I'm going to take
experts in Washington counted out
at a crucial hour
at heart . The stakes
extra prayer each night
to hedge his support
for
accept the call to
Join our cause and
help
husband Todd and I welcomed
bridge to nowhere . (APPLAUSE)
that Bridge to Nowhere .
to be better off
If
" We grow good people
man is John McCain
of our five children
at the elementary school
In
over in their arms
PALIN : Next to Todd
studio lot - what exactly
is
I ask you to
join our cause . (APPLAUSE)
My fellow Americans , come
to join our cause .
join
campaign to every part
depending on the judgment
need to produce more
to end their control
Track is the eldest
we put the government
of
of man I want as
of my hometown . And since
office that I didn't believe
part of our country and
powers that do not have
raising . . . (APPLAUSE) We're busy raising
run our factories , and fight
who grow our food , run
both grew up working
I've noticed a pattern
work in America . . . who grow
with
20th anniversary today . And I
campaign to every part of
cause
(APPLAUSE) Join our cause
Join our cause and
and help
America elect
our country
citizens should have to pay
commander in chief . (APPLAUSE) AUDIENCE :
country
. And I accept the
and our message of
first . Our nominee for
to elect a great
daughter , Bristol , another daughter , Willow ,
day , politicians have readily shared
European allies by using energy
factories , and fight our wars .
family
, it's two boys and
has the same ups
five children . In our family ,
food , run our factories , and
hands . I was just your
interests at heart . The stakes
kids . I was serving as
littlest one into the world ,
message of reform to every
nation could not be higher .
next president . In a dangerous
nominee
. He said , quote , " I
because he refused to
doesn't run with the
for president
is a
to serve
oldest son , Track , though , he'll
opponent
But listening to him
Maybe you have , too .
adds a massive tax
is against producing it .
opponents
in this presidential election
say , again and again ,
opponent's plan ? What does he
own oil and gas . And
small
town . And among the
towns , with honesty , sincerity ,
son
, Trig , a beautiful baby
enlisted in the United
Track is 19 . And
sons and daughters going into
state
and return it to
back on the side
budget is under control .
wanted a bridge ,
I
we'd
Strategic Petroleum Reserve . And families
troops in Iraq , regardless of
wars . They love their country ,
youngest daughter , Piper , and over

Image 2

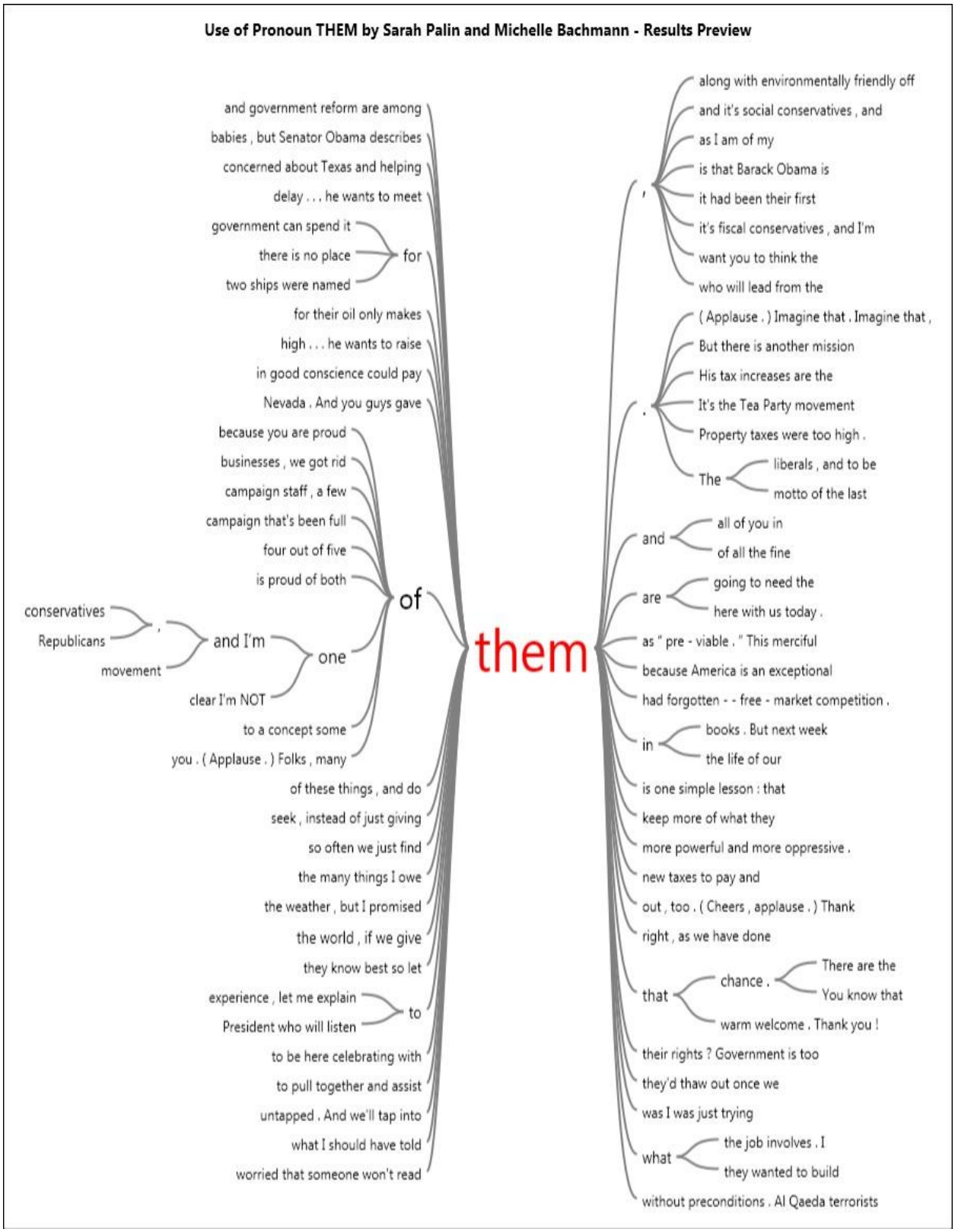
Use of Pronoun THEM by Sarah Palin and Michelle Bachmann - Results Preview
them
of
and government reform are among
babies , but Senator Obama describes
concerned about Texas and helping
delay . . . he wants to meet
for
government can spend it
there is no place
two ships were named
for their oil only makes
high . . . he wants to raise
in good conscience could pay
Nevada . And you guys gave
because you are proud
businesses , we got rid
campaign staff , a few
campaign that's been full
four out of five
is proud of both
one
and I'm
conservatives
,
Republicans
movement
clear I'm NOT
to a concept some
you . (Applause .) Folks , many
of these things , and do
seek , instead of just giving
so often we just find
the many things I owe
the weather , but I promised
the world , if we give
they know best so let
to
experience , let me explain
President who will listen
to be here celebrating with
to pull together and assist
untapped . And we'll tap into
what I should have told
worried that someone won't read
,
along with environmentally friendly off
and it's social conservatives , and
as I am of my
is that Barack Obama is
it had been their first
it's fiscal conservatives , and I'm
want you to think the
who will lead from the
.
(Applause .) Imagine that . Imagine that ,
But there is another mission
His tax increases are the
It's the Tea Party movement
Property taxes were too high .
The
liberals , and to be
motto of the last
and
all of you in
of all the fine
are
going to need the
here with us today .
as " pre - viable . " This merciful
because America is an exceptional
had forgotten - - free - market competition .
in
books . But next week
the life of our
is one simple lesson : that
keep more of what they
more powerful and more oppressive .
new taxes to pay and
out , too . (Cheers , applause .) Thank
right , as we have done
that
chance .
There are the
You know that
warm welcome . Thank you !
their rights ? Government is too
they'd thaw out once we
was I was just trying
what
the job involves . I
they wanted to build
without preconditions . Al Qaeda terrorists

Image 3

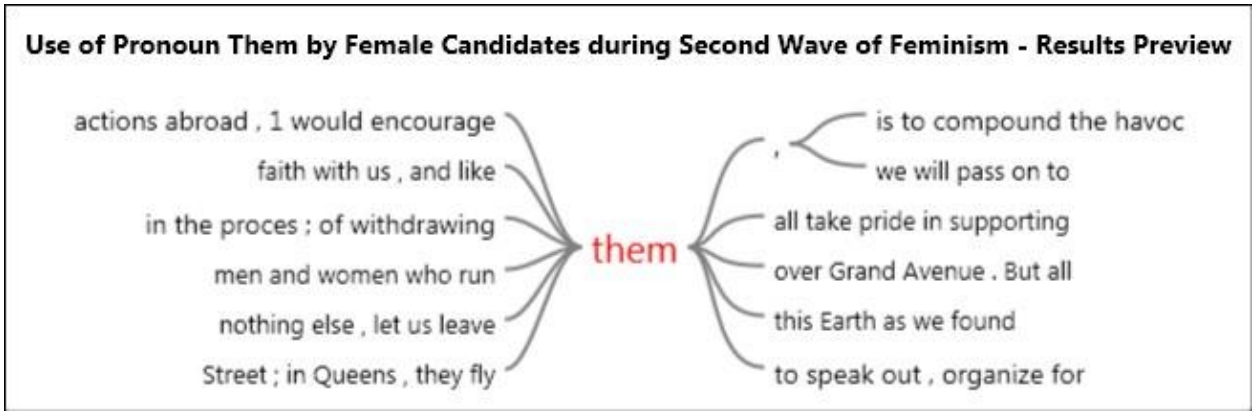
Use of Pronoun Them by Female Candidates during Second Wave of Feminism - Results Preview
actions abroad , 1 would encourage
faith with us , and like
in the proces ; of withdrawing
men and women who run
nothing else , let us leave
Street ; in Queens , they fly
them
,
is to compound the havoc
we will pass on to
all take pride in supporting
over Grand Avenue . But all
this Earth as we found
to speak out , organize for

Image 4

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Vita

Jessica M. Burris, now married as Jessica Fessenden, was born

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